

REMARKS

Claims 1-75 were presented for examination and were pending in this application. In the latest Office Action, claims 1-75 were rejected. With this amendment, claims 1, 23, 45, 46, and 75 are amended. On the basis of the following remarks, consideration of this application and allowance of all pending claims are requested.

The claimed invention is directed at automating the servicing of customers located at various service locations in a business establishment. For example, claim 1 recites a system that selects a primary service attendant to provide service for a customer at a service location, where the service location is a physical location in a business establishment. The system then communicates a message to the selected primary service attendant, which informs the service attendant what event needs to be serviced at which service location in the business establishment. This allows the selected service attendant (who may be anywhere in the business establishment) to go to the customer and provide customer service at the service location as needed. In this way, as events occur in various service locations throughout a business establishment, service attendants can be efficiently dispatched according to a set of business rules to deal with the customers' needs as they arise.

The claims were rejected as anticipated or made obvious by U.S. Patent No. 6,070,142 to McDonough, either alone or in combination with other references. Applicants respectfully assert that the claims, as amended herein, are patentable over the cited references.

McDonough describes a virtual call center for providing services to customers who request service from remote locations. Whereas the claimed invention provides services to customers at various service locations in a business establishment, McDonough is expressly directed to providing service to customers at remote locations. See McDonough, col. 3, lines 18-

21. This is a key distinction. Because McDonough's customers are not located at specific service locations in a business establishment, McDonough does not face the problem of dispatching service attendants to the various physical locations in a business establishment to service the events. Because of the difference between McDonough's service locations and those in the claimed invention, McDonough's system does not provide the claimed capability.

Moreover, because McDonough is expressly directed at providing services to customers at remote locations using a virtual call center, there would be no motivation to modify McDonough to achieve the claimed invention. McDonough is simply a call center, not a system for dispatching service attendants to physical locations in a business establishment. The claims are thus novel over McDonough as well as nonobvious over any combination of McDonough and the other references of record.

Based on the foregoing, the application is in condition for allowance of all claims, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. If the examiner believes for any reason direct contact would help advance the prosecution of this case to allowance, the examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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